

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 041048Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1357
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 09761

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, TECH, US, FR
SUBJECT: US-FRENCH NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION DIS-
CUSSIONS, PARIS, APRIL 1, 1977

1. SUMMARY. NYE AND SIEVERING MET WITH NAZELLE,
GOLDSCHMIDT AND OTHERS FOR A FULL DAY OF DISCUSSIONS
ON A BROAD RANGE OF NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION ISSUES.
THE CONTENT OF THE PROSPECTIVE US NUCLEAR POLICY STATE-
MENT OCCUPIED A GREAT DEAL OF THE TIME. THE FRENCH
ARE SERIOUSLY TROUBLED BY THE PROSPECT THAT THE US
WILL FOREGO REPROCESSING; FRANCE FIRMLY BELIEVES IT
MUST REPROCESS TO MEET ITS ENERGY NEEDS WITH INCREASING
INDEPENDENCE. FRANCE WILL NOT COMMIT ITSELF NOW TO
PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL-CYCLE
EVALUATION PROGRAM. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY

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THAT REPROCESSING BE PART OF THE PROGRAM AND THAT
MB-10S BE PROCESSED DURING THE STUDY FOR FRANCE TO
AGREE TO PARTICIPATE. THE FRENCH ASSUME THAT THE
APRIL LONDON MEETING WILL BE DEVOTED LARGELY TO A
DISCUSSION OF THE US POLICY STATEMENT. FRANCE RETAINS
ITS NEGATIVE VIEW ON FULL CYCLE SAFEGUARDS; ACCEPTANCE
WOULD REQUIRE A TOP-LEVEL POLICY DECISION. TWO WEEKS

REMAIN UNTIL THE GOF MUST CONCLUDE ITS STUDY OF THE CONTRACTS FOR THE PRINCIPAL PIECES OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE PAKISTAN REPROCESSING PLANT; ANY FURTHER DELAY WOULD REQUIRE A POLICY DECISION BY THE GOF AND BE IN VIOLATION OF ITS AGREEMENT WITH THE GOP. END SUMMARY.

2. THE US GROUP INCLUDED JOSEPH NYE, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, NELSON F. SIEVERING, ERDA, AND EMBASSY SCICOUN, WILLIAM C. SALMON. THE FRENCH GROUP WAS HEADED BY XAVIER DE NAZELLE, HEAD OF THE SCIENCE BUREAU, MFA, AND INCLUDED PHILIPPE LOUET AND MICHEL AMIGUES OF THE NUCLEAR AFFAIRS SECTION OF THE SCIENCE BUREAU, MFA, BENOIT D'ABOVILLE, POLICY PLANNING STAFF, MFA, BERTRAND GOLDSCHMIDT AND ANDRE PETIT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE, CEA, AND FRANCOIS BUJON DE L'ESTANG OF THE STAFF OF THE GENERAL DELEGATE FOR ENERGY.

3. THE SESSION WAS HELD AT PARIS ON FRIDAY, APRIL 1. MEETINGS BEGAN AT LUNCH AND WENT THROUGH THE AFTERNOON WITH THE ENTIRE FRENCH DELEGATION PARTICIPATING. A RECEPTION IN THE EARLY EVENING INCLUDED THE US AND FRENCH DELEGATIONS PLUS OTHERS FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE CEA. A WORKING DINNER INCLUDED THE US TEAM PLUS NAZELLE, GOLDSCHMIDT, LOUET AND D'ABOVILLE.

4. THE PRINCIPAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION WAS THE TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT DELIVERED TO THE FRENCH THREE DAYS EARLIER, TUESDAY, SECRET

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MARCH 29. THE FRENCH RESTATED THEIR PREVIOUS VIEW RE PARA A, THAT THE US MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THAT OTHER COUNTRIES CONSIDER NUCLEAR POWER AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY. GOLDSCHMIDT ASKED WHAT WAS MEANT BY "OTHER WEAPONS USEABLE MATERIAL" AND SUGGESTED THAT THE PHRASE READ "OTHER EASILY USEABLE WEAPONS MATERIAL."

5. RE PARA B, GOLDSCHMIDT FIRMLY CHALLENGED THE REFERENCE TO "STRONG SCIENTIFIC AND ECONOMIC EVIDENCE."

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EXDIS

IN HIS VIEW, SOME IN THE US MAY SEE THINGS IN SUCH A
LIGHT, BUT OTHERS, THE FRENCH IN PARTICULAR, BELIEVE
JUST THE CONTRARY - THAT THERE IS SOUND TECHNICAL AND
ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR UTILIZING NUCLEAR POWER INCLUDING
NOT DISCARDING THE USEABLE ENERGY STORED IN PLUTONIUM.
GOLDSCHMIDT STATED THAT IN AS MUCH AS THE US WAS CON-
SULTING THE FRENCH ON THE PROPOSED STATEMENT, HE
SUGGESTED THE TEXT READ "THAT THE US BELIEVES THERE IS
STRONG SCIENTIFIC AND ECONOMIC EVIDENCE...".

6. RE PARA C, ITEM (I) IS THE KEY ISSUE TO THE FRENCH
AND THE PHRASE "INDEFINITELY POSTPONE" LEFT THE FRENCH
READERS VERY MUCH PERPLEXED. WHEN INFORMED THAT THE
US VIEW WAS A DELAY OF FIVE OR TEN YEARS, THE FRENCH
WERE RELATIVELY RELIEVED AND URGED THAT SUCH SPECIFIC
TERMS BE USED. GOLDSCHMIDT, AFTER A BRIEF DISCUSSION

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OF THE OTHER BREEDER DESIGNS THAT THE US WAS CONSIDER-
ING, NOTED THAT THE THORIUM AND OTHER STUDIED BREEDER
CYCLES INVOLVE PLUTONIUM AT ONE PHASE OR ANOTHER.

7. RE PARA D, THE FRENCH ASKED THAT THE TEXT INCLUDE
THE REFERENCE THAT THE US WOULD KEEP IN MIND THE
DIFFERENT ENERGY SITUATIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS

IS SIMILAR TO THE ISSUE RAISED IN PARA A.

8. RE PARA E AND THE INF-CEP, THE FRENCH ASKED THAT ITEMS (I) AND (II) BE REVERSED TO GIVE PRINCIPAL EMPHASIS TO MEETING NATIONS' ENERGY NEEDS. IN ITEM (I), THE KEYSTONE TO FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE EVALUATION PROGRAM, REPROCESSING MUST BE SPECIFICALLY INCLUDED. REGARDING THE EVALUATION PROGRAM, THE FRENCH ASKED ABOUT THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY. WHAT WOULD BE THE NATURE OF THE RESULTING DOCUMENTS - A SIMPLE JOINT REPORT OR PAPERS FROM VARIOUS STUDY EFFORTS THAT WOULD BE GIVEN TO GOVERNMENTS FOR EACH TO USE IN MAKING THEIR OWN DECISION? THE FRENCH ARE SKEPTICAL OF FORMAL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND OF TRYING TO GET AN AGREED SINGLE REPORT, BUT WOULD WELCOME PAPERS FROM GROUPS OF EXPERTS.

9. IN THE DISCUSSION ON THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL-CYCLE EVALUATION PROGRAM SEVERAL POINTS ARE SIGNIFICANT REGARDING FRENCH PARTICIPATION. NAZELLE MADE THE FLAT STATEMENT THAT THE FRENCH HAD NO INTENTION OF GIVING UP REPROCESSING AS A MEANS OF SAVING FUEL AND MANAGING WASTES, AND WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE EVALUATION PROGRAM IF IT DID NOT INCLUDE REPROCESSING. THIS FRENCH POSITION REGARDING REPROCESSING WAS REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES AND IS TO BE CONSIDERED A SINE QUA NON FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE INF-CEP. GOLDSCHMIDT ADDED THAT THE FRENCH EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN JUDGING THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE CONTRIBUTED TO THE
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STUDY AND TO TAKE THE LEAD IN THE PORTION CONCERNED WITH REPROCESSING. ANOTHER APPARENT NECESSITY FOR FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE INF-CEP IS THAT THE US WOULD AGREE TO PROCESS MB-10S DURING THE PERIOD OF THE STUDY; IN NAZELLE'S VIEW THERE WOULD BE LITTLE INCENTIVE FOR THE FRENCH TO JOIN THE STUDY IF THIS WAS NOT THE CASE.

10. RE PARA F, IT IS CURRENT FRENCH POLICY NOT TO JOIN IN ANY PREARRANGED SANCTIONS ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM. FRANCE WOULD LEAVE OPEN THE QUESTION OF WHAT SUPPORTING ACTIONS IT WOULD TAKE IN THE MATTER OF A THIRD COUNTRY VIOLATING A NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH THE US; ASSUMING REASONABLE US RESPONSE TO A VIOLATION, FRANCE COULD BE EXPECTED TO NOT ACT COUNTER TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE US SANCTION.

11. RE PARA G, THE APRIL 1 DEADLINE APPEARED AS A SHORT-FUSED ULTIMATUM. THE FRENCH REACTION IS THAT

THE US IS PUSHING TOO FAST AND TOO HARD TO ACCOMPLISH
ITS OBJECTIVES AND MAY WELL LOSE POTENTIAL SUPPORT
THAT COULD BE FORTHCOMING IF THE PROCESS WAS UNDER-
TAKEN AT A MORE REASONABLE PACE PERMITTING GOVERNMENTS
TO CONSIDER EACH STEP AND ARRANGE INTERNAL POLITICAL
SUPPORT NECESSARY FOR ADOPTING NEW MEASURES.
GOLDSCHMIDT REPORTED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED WORD OF IAEA
SEC GEN ECKLAND'S STRONG REACTION TO THE TEXT. IT HAD
APPARENTLY BEEN GIVEN HIM BY THE JAPANESE PRIOR TO
HIS RECEIVING IT FROM US MISSION VIENNA.

12. TURNING TO OTHER ITEMS, NYE BRIEFED THE FRENCH

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EXDIS

ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE PAKISTAN AND BRAZIL
CONTRACTS DISCUSSIONS. NAZELLE NOTED THAT HE WOULD
PROVIDE US WITH AN EXACT PICTURE ON THE STATUS OF
THE CONTRACTS FOR THE PRINCIPAL PIECES OF EQUIPMENT FOR
THE PAKISTAN PLANT. HE IS CERTAIN THAT ONLY TWO WEEKS
REMAIN FOR THE FRENCH TO STRING OUT THE PROCESSING OF
THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ASPECTS OF SOME OF THE EQUIP-

MENT CONTRACTS. BEYOND THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A POLITICAL DECISION TO DELAY THE CONTRACT WHICH WOULD BE A VIOLATION OF ITS AGREEMENT WITH THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT.

13. THE FRENCH REVIEWED THEIR RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH JAPAN AND THAT GOVERNMENT'S "SHOCK" AT THE US DECISION ON MB-10S AFFECTING OPERATION OF JAPAN'S REPROCESSING PLANT. FROM THE FRENCH VIEWPOINT, EITHER
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REPROCESSING TECHNOLOGY IS SOLD TO JAPAN OR FRANCE SELLS REPROCESSING SERVICES TO JAPAN; TO DO NEITHER WOULD NOT BE CONSISTENT WITH THE FRENCH VIEW THAT REPROCESSING IS ESSENTIAL. REPROCESSING SERVICES IN FRANCE, THE PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE, REQUIRES THAT THE US GRANT MB-10 PERMITS. NAZELLE ALSO NOTED THAT GERMANY WAS BACKSLIDING ON MAKING A PUBLIC STATEMENT TO NOT ENTER INTO ANY NEW AGREEMENTS TO EXPORT SENSITIVE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGIES. HE FELT THE FRG WAS GOING BACK TO ITS EARLIER LEGAL STANCE.

14. REGARDING THE APRIL MEETING OF THE LONDON GROUP, THE FRENCH ARE OF THE VIEW THAT THE PRINCIPAL TOPIC WILL BE THE US STATEMENT AND THE INF-CEP; LITTLE TIME WOULD REMAIN FOR OTHER SUBJECTS. NEVERTHELESS, THE THREE TOPICS - FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARDS, PUBLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES AND FUTURE OF THE LONDON GROUP, AND PARAGRAPH 9 OF THE GUIDELINES - WERE APPROPRIATE FOR THE MEETING; DECISIONS MAY HAVE TO AWAIT ANOTHER MEETING. THE FRENCH BELIEVE THEY ARE VERY CLOSE TO THE US VIEWS ON THE MATTER OF PUBLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES AND FUTURE OF THE GROUP. GOLDSCHMIDT CAUTIONED THAT ANY FUTURE GROUPS SHOULD BE "NEAR" TO THE IAEA; CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN NOT TO UNDERMINE THE AGENCY. RE ARTICLE 9 OF THE GUIDELINES, THE FRENCH ARE NOT NOW PREPARED TO MAKE IT MANDATORY. THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT POINT OF SENSITIVITY TRIGGERS THIS PROVISION, AS THEY NOW SEE NATURAL URANIUM SALES LEADING TO A VETO ON REPROCESSING.

15. ON FULL-CYCLE SAFEGUARDS, NAZELLE STATED THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS NOT CHANGED ITS VIEW ON THE MATTER AND RETAINS ITS NEGATIVE ATTITUDE; ANY CHANGE WOULD TAKE A TOP-LEVEL POLICY DECISION. NYE ADVISED THAT THE US WOULD PROBABLY TAKE A STRONG STAND ON SOME FORM OF FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARD; NAZELLE COULD NOT SAY HOW THAT
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WOULD AFFECT FRENCH VIEWS ON THE MATTER. NAZELLE FELT THERE WAS LITTLE GAINED IN FINDING SOME COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE CURRENT FRENCH AND US POSITIONS ON THIS MATTER; IF FULL SAFEGUARDS WERE TO BE DECIDED BY SEVERAL SUPPLIER NATIONS FRENCH WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE TO JOIN OR NOT TO JOIN.

16. COMMENT. THE FRENCH ARE PRESENTED WITH SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH THE PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT. CUTTING OUT REPROCESSING IS SEEN AS FORECLOSING AN IMPORTANT ENERGY RESOURCE OPTION FOR FRANCE WHICH SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCES ITS PROSPECTS FOR APPROACHING ENERGY INDEPENDENCE. IF THE US CHOOSES NOT TO UNDERTAKE COMMERCIAL REPROCESSING, FRANCE WILL NOT RPT NOT JOIN; AND IN ITS NUCLEAR DEALINGS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES WILL FOLLOW ITS DOMESTIC RATIONALE AND NOT THAT OF THE US. THE FRENCH ARE FULL BELIEVERS IN LIMITING TO EVERY PRACTICAL EXTENT THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPON CAPABILITIES AND CAN BE BROUGHT ALONG ON ALL STEPS IN THAT DIRECTION EXCEPT WHERE IT SERIOUSLY INJURES THE FRENCH INVESTMENT AND COMMITMENT TO DOMESTIC NUCLEAR ENERGY, INCLUDING REPROCESSING AND BREEDER REACTORS.

17. THE NEXT CRITICAL STEP, FROM THE FRENCH VIEW, IS THE DESCRIPTION OF THE INF-CEP, HOW IT TREATS REPROCESSING AND INTERIM US ACTION ON MB-10S. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT ACCEPT FULL FUEL CYCLE SAFEGUARDS, DECIDE TO STALL THE PAKISTAN CONTRACT AND/OR PERHAPS TAKE A FEW OTHER POLICY DECISION BASED STEPS IF THE INF-CEP WAS DESIGNED TO MEET FRENCH BASIC INTERESTS.
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Message Attributes

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